C8920-24

- Robert DiMatteo critiques the ACEs
- Four U.S. firms in U.K. cable pilot projects
- Lifetime backers finally announce launch
- HBO execs talk more about DBS, scrambling

CableVision™

The news and features weekly of the cable television industry

December 12, 1983

Music videos

Conquerers of the youth market

PLUS Audio files

CableVision December 12, 1983. Volume 9, Number 15

Between the lines/5
CableScope/11
Newswire/12
Update/17
Leading the week/18
CableVision Plus/27
Programming feature/51
Business/58
People/63
Classifieds/64
Advertisers' index/69
Cable stats/70
Parting words/74

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ABP BPA

Third cable program meet

NCTA expects 1,000 people for its third cable programming conference, to take place Dec. 11-12. Beyond panels and the ACE Awards, attendees can expect announcements from Showtime, The Movie Channel, the Council for Cable Information and USA Network. **Leading the week, pages 18-24.**

Lifetime sets air date

Hearst/ABC-Viacom Entertainment Services, after months in waiting, finally announce a February launch date for Lifetime, the merged service arising from consolidation of Daytime and Cable Health Network. **Leading the week, pages 18-24.**

HBO mulls DBS plans

HBO executives start to talk a bit more about their much-rumored DBS plans, confirming that talks are ongoing with MSOs about doing installations in non-cabled areas adjacent to their franchises. Meanwhile, DBS rights appear to figure in HBO's timetable to scramble its national feeds. **Leading the week, pages 18-24.**

U.K. begins negotiations

The British government moves forward with its pilot cable projects, as 11 bidders are selected to negotiate for licenses to wire parts of Great Britain. American firms ATC, Comcast, Cablevision and Oak are involved in winning bids. **Leading the week, pages 18-24.**

Rollins loses franchise

The Massachusetts cable television commission decides to revoke Rollins' franchise in Danvers. This is the second time the Atlanta-based MSO has lost a franchise in that state. **Leading the week, pages 18-24.**

Wirth confronts cities

The League of Cities officially backs off from the House cable bill at its annual meeting, despite a point-by-point defense offered by its author, Rep. Tim Wirth. **Leading the week, pages 18-24.**

Wheeler reigns through '85

The NCTA Board extends President Tom Wheeler's contract through Nov. 1, 1985, and elevates Executive Vice President Jim Mooney to COO. **Leading the week, pages 18-24.**

Jerrold plans telco use

Canadian telco technology figures in Jerrold plans to offer off-premises addressable equipment starting next year. The products ultimately will have capacity for handling transactional, interactive and possibly telco services. **Leading the week, pages 18-24.**

ABC unveils pay TV project

ABC's new TeleFirst pay TV experiment will begin operations in Chicago on Jan. 17. **Leading the week, pages 18-24.**

DiMatteo

Einstein, ACE and cable

CableVision critic Robert DiMatteo takes a retrospective look at 1983 cable fare with some picks and pans. DiMatteo was one of the judges for this year's Awards for Cablecasting Excellence, and comments on the structure of the program and its categories. **Page 51.**

Philly cable efforts stalled

Preliminary evaluations have been received, but the November vote was postponed. **Page 58.**

About the cover

Los Angeles Bureau Chief Eric Taub examines the world of music videos in this week's *CableVision Plus*. Shown on the cover is Billy Joel, from the video shoot of *Tell Her About It*, produced by Jon Small and directed by Jay Dubin. Photo courtesy of Columbia Records. Story on page 30.

This week in PLUS

When MTV launched, it hit a vein among young viewers more directly than has almost anything in recent years. Its effect on the youth market is so strong that even the unbending record companies are changing their marketing strategies to better sell their albums. Watching MTV's success, many an entrepreneur decided to try his hand at music videos. Will the market bear so many like services? And will music video successes be long-lived or just a passing fad?. . . Meanwhile, audio-only programmers in growing numbers are making plans to transmit via cable. Their plan is to help reduce churn and to offer additional revenue to cable operators. And as they gear up their services, the technology is gearing up for a more secure and eventually digital mode of transmission. **Pages 27-50.**

Film product comparison—December

Film	Pay Networks					Distributor
Absence of Malice	HBO				(C)	Columbia
A Christmas Carol		SHO	TMC			20th Century-Fox
The Adventures of the Wilderness Family		SHO	(TMC)	HTN		Simcom
A Hero Ain't Nothin' But a Sandwich					C	UFA
A Lady Takes a Chance					C	Samuel Goldwyn Co.
A Little Sex	HBO		(TMC)			Universal
Alone in the Dark		SHO*	(TMC)			Viacom
An Officer and a Gentleman	HBO	SHO*	(TMC)			Paramount
A Song is Born					C	Samuel Goldwyn Co.
Author! Author!	(HBO)	SHO*	TMC	HTN		20th Century Fox
Baby Blue Marine				HTN*	(C)	Columbia
The Best Years of Our Lives		(SHO)			C*	Samuel Goldwyn Co.
Beyond a Reasonable Doubt			TMC			Satori
Birgitt Haas Must Be Killed			TMC			Frank Moreno
The Blue Lagoon					C	Janus
Bonnie Scotland		SHO				MGM/UA
Breaking Away		SHO*	(TMC)		(C)	20th Century-Fox
Breaker Morant	HBO				(C)	New World
Brigadoon		SHO				MGM/UA
The Burning		SHO	TMC			Orion
Bush Christmas			TMC			Quartet
Butterfly		SHO				Analysis
Cannary Row		(SHO)	TMC	HTN*	(C)	MGM/UA
The Challenge	HBO		TMC			CBS
Chariots of Fire		SHO*	(TMC)	HTN		Warner Bros.
The Chosen	HBO	SHO	TMC			20th Century-Fox
Clay Pidgeon					C	MGM/UA
Confessions of a Pop Performer		SHO				Columbia
Confessions of a Window Cleaner		SHO*				Columbia
The Cowboy and the Lady		SHO				Goldwyn
Creepshow	HBO	SHO	TMC			Warner Bros.
Crossbar	HBO	SHO	TMC	(HTN)		Oak Media
Dangerous When Wet		SHO				MGM/UA
Das Boot/The Boat	HBO*	(SHO)				Columbia
Death Trap	(HBO)		TMC			Warner Bros.
Death Wish II	(HBO)				C*	Orion
Decision before Dawn				HTN		20th Century-Fox
The Deep		SHO			(C)	Columbia
Dirty Hands		SHO*				Film Gallery
Diva	HBO		TMC			MGM/UA
Don's Party		SHO				Satori
Don't Cry, It's Only Thunder		SHO	(TMC)	(HTN)	(C)	Samuel Goldwyn Co.
Don't Go Near The Water		SHO				MGM/UA
Dot and Santa Claus		SHO			C	Satori
Double Deal					C	Samuel Goldwyn Co.
Dragonslayer	(HBO)	SHO*				Paramount
Dusty			TMC			Castle Hill
Eating Raoul	HBO		(TMC)		(C)	20th Century-Fox
Elizabeth the Queen				HTN		Enter-Tel
Endangered Species	HBO	SHO	TMC			MGM/UA
Enigma	HBO*		TMC*			Embassy
Enter the Ninja		SHO*	(TMC)		(C)	Viacom
Evil Under the Sun					C	AFD
Fast Company					C	Tom Parker
Final Assignment	HBO		TMC			Almi Group
The First Time	(HBO)		TMC			Film Gallery
Force Five	HBO*	(SHO)				Viacom
Forever Darling		SHO				MGM/UA
Four Friends	HBO		TMC			Orion
Frances					C	AFD
Friendly Persuasion			TMC		C	Lorimar
Gallipoli	(HBO)		TMC	(HTN)		Paramount
Gigot		HTN				20th Century-Fox
Gimme Shelter			(TMC)		C	Almi Group
Gizmo		(SHO)		HTN		Film Gallery
The Godfather II		(SHO)	(TMC)		C*	Paramount
Goodbye Emmanuelle		(SHO)			C	Miramax
Gray Lady Down		(SHO)			C*	Universal
Grease 2			TMC*			Paramount
Great Adventure	SHO*					Simcom
Hamlet				HTN*		Columbia
Happy Road	SHO					MGM/UA
Having a Wild Weekend		SHO				Warner Bros.
Heavy Metal	(HBO)		TMC		(C)	Columbia
Hit and Run			TMC			Comworld

Film	Pay Networks					Distributor
Honky Tonk Freeway					C	AFD
Honky Tonk Man	(HBO)	SHO*	(TMC)	(HTN)		Warner Bros.
The Hound of the Baskervilles	(HBO)	SHO*	TMC*			PSO
Humanoid from the Deep		SHO				Viacom
If You Could See What I Hear	(HBO)	(SHO)			C	Jensen Farley
I Never Promised You a Rose Garden			(TMC)		C	Viacom
Interrupted Melody		SHO				MGM/UA
I Ought To Be in Pictures		SHO*		(HTN)		20th Century-Fox
It Happened at the World's Fair		SHO				MGM/UA
I Wonder Who's Killing Her Now					C*	Lorimar
Jesus				HTN		Warner Bros.
Just Before Dawn		SHO	(TMC)			Juniper
The Kid From Brooklyn					C*	Samuel Goldwyn Co.
The Kidnapping of the President					C*	Viacom
Klondike Fever	HBO*					HBO
The Last Unicorn	(HBO)		TMC*			AFD
L'Aventura					C	Janus
Let's Spend the Night Together					C	Embassy
Liar's Moon			TMC			Crown Int'l
The Long Good Friday					C	Handmade Films
Long Riders			TMC		C	MGM/UA
Lookin' to Get Out	(HBO)		(TMC)		C	Lorimar
Love at First Bite		SHO				Viacom
Love Child	(HBO)	SHO	(TMC)			Warner Bros.
MacArthur		SHO*			C	Universal
The Man From Snowy River	HBO	SHO*	TMC*	HTN		20th Century-Fox
The Man Who Skied Down Everest			TMC			Cinema 5

John Voight (right) stars as a divorced father trying to establish a new relationship with his kids—played by Robby Kiger (in robe), Roxanna Zal and Son Hoang Bui—in 'Table for Five.'

Cable stats

Film	Pay Networks					Distributor
Megaforce	HBO				(C)	Film Gallery
The Mirror Cracked					C	AFD
The Missionary	HBO*		(TMC)			Columbia
Mondo Cane					C*	Janus
Moonshine County Express			TMC*		(C)	Viacom
Monsignor	HBO	SHO				20th Century-Fox
The Mouse and His Child	(HBO)		TMC			Sanrio
My Cousin Rachel				HTN		Fox
My Fair Lady			TMC	HTN	C	CBS
The Next Man					C	Lorimar
Nine Hours to Rama				(HTN)	C*	20th Century-Fox
Nobody's Perfect				HTN*		Columbia
The Nutcracker				HTN		Warner Bros.
Oliver			TMC	HTN*	C*	Columbia
One Dark Night			TMC*			Cornworld
On the Waterfront			TMC	HTN	C	Columbia
Pennies from Heaven			TMC			MGM/UA
Peter No Tail		(SHO)	TMC*	(HTN)		Atlantic
The Pirate Movie	(HBO)	(SHO)	TMC*			20th Century-Fox
Poltergeist	(HBO)		(TMC)		C*	MGM/UA
Porky's	HBO	SHO	TMC			20th Century-Fox
The Return of Frank James				HTN		20th Century-Fox
Rio Conchos					C	20th Century-Fox
Rockshow			TMC			Miramax
Rocky III	(HBO)	(SHO)	(TMC)	HTN*	(C)	MGM/UA
Rollover	HBO	SHO	(TMC)			Warner Bros.
Same Time Next Year			TMC		C	Universal
Savage Messiah					C	MGM/UA
Seach and Destroy	HBO	(SHO)				Viacom
The Secret Life of Walter Mitty		(SHO)	TMC*		(C)	Samuel Goldwyn Co.
The Secret of NIMH	HBO	(SHO)	(TMC)	(HTN)		MGM/UA
The Seduction					C*	Embassy
The Sex Machine		SHO			C	Seymour Borde
Sharky's Machine	HBO	(SHO)	(TMC)			Warner Bros.
Sherlock Holmes and the Scarlet Claw			TMC			Gutman
Sign of Four	HBO		TMC			PSO
Six Pack	(HBO)	(SHO)	(TMC)	(HTN)	C*	20th Century-Fox
Six Weeks	HBO					Polygram
Smash Palace			TMC			Atlantic
Snoopy Come Home			TMC	HTN		CBS
Sodom and Gomorrah				HTN	C	20th Century-Fox
The Soldier	(HBO)		TMC*			Embassy
Soldier in Love				HTN		Enter-Tel
Spirit of the Wind		SHO*		HTN*		Atlantic
Split Image					C*	Polygram
Stacey		SHO				Electric Picture Co.
Stardust					C	Columbia
Still of the Night	HBO*	SHO*	(TMC)	(HTN)		MGM/UA
Superman II		SHO	(TMC)			Warner Bros.
Table for Five	HBO*	SHO*	TMC	HTN		CBS
Tempest	HBO		(TMC)	(HTN)	(C)	Columbia
Thank You All Very Much					C	Columbia
They Got Me Covered		SHO				Samuel Goldwyn Co.
Things are Tough all Over	HBO		(TMC)		(C)	Columbia
Threshold			TMC			20th Century-Fox
Thunderbirds 1086: Devils Naon		SHO				ITC
Thunderbirds 2086: Thunderbold		SHO*				ITC
To Race the Wind		SHO*	(TMC)		(C)	Viacom
The Toy	(HBO)	(SHO)	(TMC)	HTN*	(C)	Columbia
Treasures of the Snow		SHO*				Turner Prog. Serv.
Vanishing Wilderness	HBO					Simcom
Venom	(HBO)	(SHO)	TMC*			William Morris
The Verdict		SHO				20th Century-Fox
Vice Squad			TMC		(C)	Embassy
Victoria Regina				HTN		Enter-Tel
What a Way To Go			TMC*	HTN		Fox
Whose Life is it Anyway?			TMC		(C)	MGM/UA
The Wild Pony		SHO*	(TMC)			Sy Fischer
Wrong is Right	(HBO)				C	Columbia
Yes, Georgio!	HBO*	SHO*	TMC*	HTN		MGM/UA
Zapped	(HBO)	(SHO)	TMC			Embassy

Cable Network Legend
HBO—Home Box Office
SHO—Showtime
TMC—The Movie Channel
HTN—Home Theater Network
C—Cinemax

■ Networks in parentheses indicate carriage in July, August, September, October, November and/or December.

■ An asterisk following a network indicates the film is a carry-over from July, August, September, October, November and/or December.

■ In total, 173 films appear on the December schedules of HBO, Showtime, The Movie Channel, HTN and Cinemax. Of those titles during the last six months (July-December 1983), three films—"Rocky III," "Six Pack," and "The Toy"—played on all five services. Thirteen films appeared on four of the five networks, 30 on three and 52 on two networks. Seventy-five films are unduplicated.

■ The motion picture distributor to pay cable with the most titles featured this month is MGM/UA with 21, followed by 20th Century-Fox with 19 and Columbia with 18.

■ "The Man from Snowy River," starring Australian newcomer Tom Burlison and veteran actor Kirk Douglas, appears on the cover of HTN's guide. Showtime's guide features family movies, a comedy with Mel King and "Faerie Tale Theater." HBO, HBO/Cinemax, and The Movie Channel celebrate Christmas with colorful holiday decorations on their guide covers.

Top 20 MSOs

Rank	Multiple system operator	Basic subs
1.	Tele-Communications Inc.[1]	2,500,000 (9/83)
2.	American Television and Communications Corp.	2,300,000 (9/83)
3.	Group W Cable	1,917,000
4.	Cox Cable Communications Inc.	1,430,247
5.	Warner Amex Cable Communications Inc.	1,350,000
6.	Storer Cable Communications	1,315,000 (9/83)
7.	Times Mirror Cable Television Inc.	885,311 (9/83)
8.	Newhouse Broadcasting[2]	769,649 (9/83)
9.	Continental Cablevision	723,000
10.	Viacom Cablevision	699,561
11.	United Cable Television Corp.	601,000 (9/83)
12.	Sammons Communications Inc.	566,929
13.	Rogers Cablesystems Inc.	467,073 (9/83)
14.	Cablevision Systems Development	376,000
15.	TeleCable Corp.	375,295 (9/83)
16.	Heritage Communications	356,224
17.	Capital Cities Cable Inc.	335,600 (6/83)
18.	UA Cablesystems Corp.	331,300
19.	Comcast Cable Communications	320,000
20.	General Electric Cablevision	318,000

Subscriber counts are as of 10/83 unless noted otherwise.
[1]Number is an estimate.
[2]Includes MetroVision, NewChannels, Vision Cable.
Source: Sub counts are provided by the MSOs for ICR, Cable Information Service—a Titsch Communications division.

Top 20 systems

Rank	Location	Operator	Basic subs	
1.	San Diego, Calif.	Cox Cable	233,476	(11/83)
2.	Woodbury (Long Island), N.Y.	Cablevision Systems	203,000	(8/83)
3.	Houston, Texas	Warner Amex	184,900	(7/83)
4.	Manhattan, N.Y.	ATC	181,575	(9/83)
5.	San Antonio, Texas	Rogers Cablesystems	166,341	(9/83)
6.	West Orange, N.J.	Maclean Hunter	152,667	(9/83)
7.	Wayne, N.J.	UA Cablesystems	124,300	
8.	Cincinnati, Ohio	Warner Amex	110,500	(7/83)
9.	Tulsa, Okla.	United Cable	109,272	(9/83)
10.	Audubon, N.J.	NYT Cable	107,511	
11.	Rochester, N.Y.	ATC	103,300	(9/83)
12.	Erie County, N.Y.	Prime Cable	102,664	(11/83)
13.	San Jose, Calif.	Gill Industries	98,500	(8/83)
14.	Baltimore County, Md.	Cultec Cablevision	97,967	
15.	Tidewater, Va.	Cox Cable	97,201	
16.	Austin, Texas	ATC	94,740	(9/83)
17.	Honolulu, Hawaii	ATC	92,100	(9/83)
18.	Seattle, Wash.	Group W Cable	91,200	
19.	Orlando, Fla.[1]	ATC	90,000	(9/83)
20.	Memphis, Tenn.	ATC	89,950	(9/83)

Subscriber counts are as of 10/83 unless noted otherwise.
[1] Number is an estimate.
Source: Sub counts are provided by the operators for ICR, Cable Information Service—a Titsch Communications division.